

## Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

### Purple mountain pitcher plant, boars, and bogs

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which keeps our nation's list of threatened and endangered animals, was recently asked to place the purple mountain pitcher plant on that list.

I recently had a chance to visit the last place this pitcher plant grows in the wild in Georgia. After a long drive along a country road, then a few miles along a gravel road to a remote corner of National Forest, we were ready to hike to the site. However, our first stop wasn't a beautiful mountain bog, rather, a pen.

A circular pen, with two to three layers of wire fencing. It was about 15-feet across, set amongst a stand of pine trees. On one side was a door constructed of metal tubing, that swings into the pen, but not out. It was a wild hog trap. The pigs would come into the pen to get the fermented corn left as bait.

Wild boards are not native to the Southern Appalachians, and they pose a challenge for people trying to manage wildlands, especially those managing for rare plants and animals. The problem at this site is the wild boar would root in the bog, trampling and uprooting the mountain purple pitcher plants. It's a situation where an aggressive, non-native animal is putting a population of rare, native plants at risk. Fortunately, the Forest Service is taking steps to protect this rare plant and its rare habitat.

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peeples.